

No. 1983-20

AN ACT

HB 190

Amending the act of June 24, 1931 (P.L.1206, No.331), entitled "An act concerning townships of the first class; amending, revising, consolidating, and changing the law relating thereto," further providing for reductions in police or fire forces.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Section 644 of the act of June 24, 1931 (P.L.1206, No.331), known as The First Class Township Code, reenacted and amended May 27, 1949 (P.L.1955, No.569) and amended October 4, 1978 (P.L.946, No.186), is amended to read:

Section 644. Removals.—No person employed in any police or fire force of any township shall be suspended, removed or reduced in rank except for the following reasons: (1) physical or mental disability affecting his ability to continue in service, in which cases the person shall receive an honorable discharge from service; (2) neglect or violation of any official duty; (3) violation of any law of this Commonwealth which provides that such violation constitutes a misdemeanor or felony; (4) inefficiency, neglect, intemperance, disobedience of orders, or conduct unbecoming an officer; (5) intoxication while on duty; (6) engaging or participating in conducting of any political or election campaign otherwise than to exercise his own right of suffrage. A person so employed shall not be removed for religious, racial or political reasons. A written statement of any charges made against any person so employed shall be furnished to such person within five days after the same are filed with the commission.

If for reasons of economy or other reasons it shall be deemed necessary by any township to reduce the number of paid employes of the police or fire force, then such township shall apply the following procedure: (a) if there are any employes eligible for retirement under the terms of any retirement or pension law, then such reduction in numbers shall be made by retirement if the party to be retired is eligible for retirement; (b) if the number of paid employes in the police or fire forces eligible to retirement is insufficient to effect the necessary reduction in numbers or if there are no persons eligible for retirement or if no retirement or pension fund exists, then the reduction shall be effected by furloughing the person or persons, including probationers, last appointed to the respective force. Such removal shall be accomplished by furloughing in numerical order commencing with the person last appointed until such reduction shall have been accomplished. In the event the said police force shall again be increased, the employes furloughed shall be reinstated in the order of their seniority in the service. *The provisions of this paragraph as to reductions in force shall not apply to any chief of police.*

Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.

APPROVED—The 7th day of July, A. D. 1983.

DICK THORNBURGH